

2 - MAY 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director for Central Reference

SUBJECT: Product Coding Program in IR

25X1A9a 1. Following the CRAG meeting of 11 April 1958, I set up a Task Force, led by [REDACTED] Chief of the Transport and Heavy Machinery Branch of D/I, to review the proposal of IR to reduce the scope of product coding and to strengthen the processing of information obtained through [REDACTED]. This Task Force talked with officers in IR and with selected and experienced analysts and supervisors of intelligence production components within OHR. The Task Force concluded that the implementation of the proposal under consideration would not injure the research efforts of OHR.

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25X1B0c 2. As I understand it, the substance of the IR proposal is the reduction of product coding from 10 digits to 3 digits, thereby reducing the possibility for machine recovery of documents on specific products. Product coding to 10 digits would, however, continue to be available for all material in the IR files processed before the cut-off date on product coding. Manual searching would have to be done for any new material processed after the cut-off. Personnel would then be shifted to the processing of [REDACTED].

25X1B4d 3. During the review by the Task Force, IR stated that it would code up to 7 digits in limited areas that might be selected by OHR Branches. Otherwise, machine recovery would be effected through 3 digits, with the IR analyst performing a manual search to recover documents coded beyond 3 digits. During our investigation, the Task Force discussed this matter with the Division Chiefs of the Economic and Geographic Research Areas and with the Chief of the [REDACTED]. The Chiefs of those Branches which have made the greatest use of product coding -- I/OM, M/CH, M/NF, and S/COM -- were also consulted. There was no objection to the IR proposal from any of the individuals contacted. Nor did any of the branches or divisions express a desire to request IR to code beyond 3 digits for the commodities within their field of responsibility.

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4. We feel that, while there would be some reduction in the ability of IR to recover speedily documents on specific commodities under the proposed change, the interests of ORR analysts would not be materially damaged. ORR analysts in the past have made few requests for product coding that could not be covered by a 3-digit system. Furthermore, the analyst can continue to obtain machine recovery up to 10 digits on the mass of IR material processed prior to the changeover to the new system. We think that the strengthening of [REDACTED] and the area branches of IR made possible by the elimination of the Product Coding Branch will more than compensate for the slight reduction in the efficiency of IR product coding.

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5. ORR concurs with the change in the product coding system as proposed by IR.

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Research and Reports

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